

Not on Calvary



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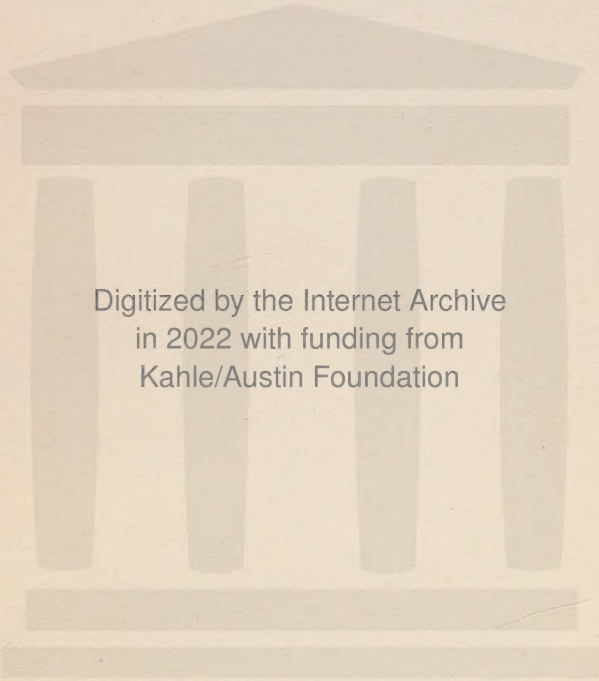
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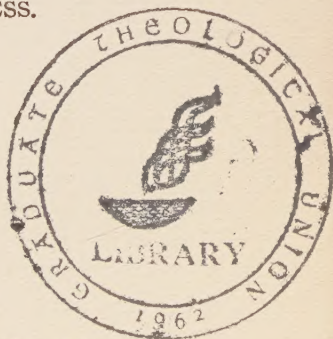


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NOT ON CALVARY

A LAYMAN'S

PLEA FOR MEDIATION IN THE TEMPTATION
IN THE WILDERNESS.



New York
CHARLES T. DILLINGHAM & CO.
718 AND 720 BROADWAY
1892

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INTRODUCTION.

To you whose faith is fixed and abiding, this brings no message. Its appeal is only to you who have gone down into the dark valley of doubt, and cannot find your way out, because the paths seem so tortuous—the guides so conflicting.

Mayhap, this will lead you out on the other side, where—not because the atmosphere is purer, but because from another point of vision, another facet of many-sided truth flashes back the light—the old loved faith may be seen again; but resting on a foundation where is represented no Father's love incongruously blended with a stern retributive justice, that could be satisfied

only by the ignominious death of the Innocent; but where the Divine Tragedy is represented as the last exercise of malignant power by the almost divine but fallen one, in that redemptive contest where our Lord literally bought back the spiritual freedom of mankind through the spiritual danger that He, girded with the weakness of the flesh, was presumed to encounter when he was led by the Spirit into the wilderness.



THIS does not assume to treat the subject comprehensively, but is offered in the hope that it will suggest a broader and more scholarly treatment than a layman can present. For the sake of brevity this defense is limited to the words of our Lord and the history of His life. Consequently, a fair criticism will be within the same limits.

NOT ON CALVARY.

“God is not wisely trusted when declared unintelligible.”

“Such honor, rooted in dishonor, stands ;
Such faith, unfaithful, makes us falsely true.”

“Ring out the old, ring in the new,
* * * * * *
Ring in the Christ that is to be.”

Luke xxi., 28: “Then look up and lift up your heads,
for your redemption draweth nigh.”

Redemption—wonderful word ! remarkable not less for the simplicity and clearness of its meaning, than for its almost universal application to one specific condition,—the recovery of something once possessed, but which can be recovered only on the payment of a price.

But there is one exception to the otherwise universal acceptance of the meaning and application of the word redemption. When we enter the domain of religion, we find its simplicity lost, its clear interpretation sacrificed to the supposed necessity of maintaining the belief that the great drama of man's redemption included only the Divine personalities.

Nothing in the sharp rebukes of our Lord to the sophistries of the Pharisees exceeded His indignation at the liberties they had taken with the clear meaning of their divinely taught instructors. His indignation finds a ready echo in our hearts. Are we sure that we are less in error, though less in guilt, in ignoring the natural derivative force of the word redemption?

Will not the words of our blessed Lord sustain us in our attempt to re-invest His title of Redeemer with its otherwise universal meaning?

At the outset, if we attempt to use the word redemption in this universal and natural way, we must discontinue impersonal terms in describing the opposing interests in this great transaction of redemption; for deprecate it as we may, the time has gone by when doubt or honest inquiry can be met with the "hush of a holy awe," or silenced with an exhortation to accept mystery as the evidence of Divine truth. Atheism and the Anti-Christ must be combated with logical arguments, and with language that is consistent and of universal application.

In the domain of religion, as in every other department of thought, consistent reasoning and accurate expression is demanded.

Does the accepted meaning of the word redemption enable us to meet the most common objections of the infidel? Of these objections take, for instance, his query—"How could the

Divinity, if it is a unity, sacrifice part of itself to itself, and was this sacrifice a sacrifice to itself as a whole or to only a part of itself? and if to a part, to what part?" And "How could such a sacrifice be demanded, and still the demand be consistent with the love and tenderness of the Divine character, of which Christ is presented as an exponent?" Or again, "If Christ was divinely sent and was God in flesh sent on earth for a sacrifice, which was to be in the form of a crucifixion in his adult years, why did He, as a child, flee into Egypt (at God's command) to avoid death at the hand of an earthly ruler?"

If we accept the crucifixion as the means of redemption, we must ignore or deny the account of His flight into Egypt; but rather let us offer the theory of our Lord's exposure to Satan, all through His life; then we can readily account for the purpose of Satan to effect the

destruction by Herod of the one with whom he knew he must cope, in a struggle that might cost him his power.

In our attempt to invest the religious use of the word redemption with its natural and otherwise universal sense, we must clearly state our meaning in regard, first, as to the value to be regained—man's spiritual freedom ; second, who was its then lawful holder—"the Prince of this world"; third, from whose original possession had it passed—God's; fourth, what was the price demanded by its lawful or potent holder in return for its transfer to its original possessor—the anticipated dominion over our Lord by His subjection through the weakness of the flesh.

Let us consider, who was the holder of the value to be redeemed—what the price he was to receive.

"Then was Jesus *led* of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the *devil*."

Let us first examine the significance of the word "led." It has much of the force of the Greek aorist; that is, its immediate action is almost put out of sight, in the consideration which the mind is called upon to give to the train of events that have brought about the captivity which makes the "leading" possible; many illustrations of this meaning may be found in all parts of the Bible; but there is no better illustration of this force of the word "led" than in that petition our Lord taught us, "Lead us not into temptation"; words that would be of doubtful significance if this aorist force of the word "led" did not convey our acknowledgment of our previous subjugation and exposure to that same personality into whose power our Lord for our sakes was "led," and so that phrase of our Lord's prayer becomes an acknowledgment of our consciousness of that malign power, and a tribute of our faith in the Father's power to

strengthen us successfully to resist the power of the devil.

“Led of the spirit—to *be* tempted of the devil.” If we will divest our minds of all preconceptions, can we fairly claim that this humiliation of our Lord—to which He was brought by the Spirit, in its double office of divinely co-equal consoler, and as witness of the completeness of divine surrender of divinity in the environment of the flesh, to the devil—can we fairly advance it as a plausible theory that this humiliation of divinity to the devil was only as an example to us to resist evil?

Let us remember that all the knowledge we have of the events of those forty days are three incidents just at the close of the period of trial. Nor must we forget that it was this trial, not that at Gethsemane or on Calvary, which the Holy Spirit dignified with its presence. No, only something of far deeper meaning, of sub-

tlar force, can reasonably account for this humiliation of our Lord at the hands of the Arch Rebel—the almost divine before he fell, still almost divine in the grandeur and scope of his power.

He had induced angels to rebel even in Heaven. “God’s image” in the environment of flesh he had successfully tempted to evil; there remained only one possible victory,—his conquest over Divinity exposed to his power through the weakness of humanity,—and we may presume that without that victory his eventual subjugation would be complete.

Is it not more reasonable to suppose that Satan invited this last great contest, where his success meant a resuming (nay, more, an increasing) of his once almost divine power; but defeat would be a rendering back to God of the power He had given him; and so through this exposure and humiliation and contest of our Lord

with Satan came the "buying back" of the God-given, but misused, power over man? Is not this a more tenable theory than that a loving Father demanded the sacrifice of His Son to appease His anger toward a race that had been drawn into sin by a superior sinful being whom He had created and still maintained in all his seductive and debasing power?

Even if no other argument were presented to show that not in the crucifixion alone came man's redemption, that prayer of our Lord in Gethsemane would, unsupported, seem almost convincing: "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me."

Far from divine He would seem to have been; infinitely less heroic, even humanly speaking, than the host of martyrs who exultantly met death for His sake, He must have been; and with infinitely less faith in His own mission, if (with the knowledge that the cruci-

fixion was the only means for man's redemption) He had appealed to the Father to permit the cup of His expiatory suffering to pass from Him.

It must have been some gain or loss of infinitely less importance than the redemption of mankind, that was imminent when that appeal was made. Had it been man's redemption, and He divine, He must have known—without need of appeal—whether the draining of the cup was unavoidable. Consequently His appeal to the Father must refer to some conditions of which He was not cognizant, because of later development than in those divine councils before He left heaven—councils in which He must then have been a participant, equal in knowledge and honor.

We find the explanation of His appeal to the Father—to show Him the extent of His humiliation—in these words : “This is your hour and

the power of darkness." In the environment of the flesh, and we may presume its consequent limitation of knowledge, it would be natural that He should appeal to the Father to learn how far His submission to the power of the devil must bring suffering and humiliation ; for we may fairly infer that the devil had no settled and defined plan, but adapted his attacks upon our Lord to what seemed most effective, as events developed ; so while our Lord expected death, He was conscious that His redemptive work was already done, and it presumably seemed to Him that that which was only humiliation and suffering through the instrumentality of the "power of darkness" might be omitted, and that death in some less ignominious form might suffice.

As a co-equal member of the Godhead He would have known, uninstructed, what were the conditions of deliberations and agreements

and purposes in which Divinity was the sole participant, if crucifixion was the fore-ordained means of redemption ; for our Lord must have been a participant in those divine deliberations, held before He took on Himself those limitations of the flesh which would naturally compel Him to appeal to the Father for a knowledge of the extent of demoniac demands, as they had developed after He had left heaven.

This appeal of our Lord, "Father, if it be possible," is so recognized a weakness in the common theory of redemption, that great pains have been taken to explain that it was the humanity of our Lord which was asserting itself in that crucial hour ; but surely in that grand culmination of His mission the divinity would have risen superior to the flesh, if the crucifixion had been the only means for man's redemption.

How frequent are the allusions, in our Lord's last interview with His disciples, to the power of the devil : "And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot to betray him," and "After the sop Satan entered into him," and "Hereafter I will not talk much with you, for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me," and "judgment, because the prince of this world is judged" ; so too as our Lord stood before Pilate, "My kingdom is not of this world ; if my kingdom were of this world, then should my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews."

Why these repeated references to the agency of the devil in His crucifixion, if He was not in the power of Satan, who was to use his power to end the life He had been unable to debase ?

True, there are utterances of our Lord that can be advanced as antagonistic to this theory of redemption already accomplished.

“This is my blood, which is shed for you and for many for the remission of sins.”

Yet may it not be that, with the suffering so imminent, He was absorbed in its contemplation, so that His thoughts were only of that, the last event in His submission to the power of Satan, and His utterances were influenced by that?

Have we not a right to give an equal force to those other words of our Lord spoken at that time: “I have finished the work that thou gavest me to do,” and also, “Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world”? If we accept these last two expressions literally, then our Lord positively asserted that the crucifixion was not essential to redemption, for in these He distinctly states that the redemptive work had been done, so that whatever literalness of interpretation we give either to the first or to the last two expressions we must give to all, and recon-

cile any seeming conflict of meaning, as in all such cases, by the preponderance of evidence. Notably that appeal to the Father that the cup might pass from Him, shows that our Lord did not regard the crucifixion as essential to redemption, only so far as His redemptive surrender to Satan must extend to the limit of His earthly life—whatever the consequences: a surrender that began in that keener suffering in the wilderness, where He endured an agony, “for the remission of sins,” presumably far more bitter than in the briefer pain in which “my blood is shed”; a surrender of which the crucifixion was a result—not a complete unavoidable condition of expiation.

How often a humiliating sorrow is hidden, till at last, with some added insult, the overburdened soul can no longer be silent, and the wounded spirit compels expression; thus our Lord as He stood before Pilate. “Speakest

thou not unto me?" was the contemptuous demand of Pilate. "Knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?"

The cup of ignominy was full, and with this added insult there came from the lips of our Lord the sorrow-wrung admission of His subjection to the power of the devil, that was to have its final wreaking of otherwise impotent hate in His crucifixion :

"Thou couldst have no power at all against me except it were given thee from above ; *therefore* he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin," are words that can refer only to "the prince of this world," for there was no one else but God and Cæsar that were above Pilate, and Cæsar had no part in the divine tragedy ; and "greater sin" excludes God. Let us not pass lightly the force of the connective "therefore" that couples "sin" with

the *one* by whose power, higher than Pilate's, our Lord was delivered into Pilate's hands for crucifixion. That it was a power "above" Pilate, excludes its application to the Jewish tribunal that had condemned our Lord.

If these words were unsupported they would prove that for some great purpose our Lord was delivered into Satan's hands with such completeness of surrender that, practically, it was by Satan He was crucified; and Satan would not crucify Him for man's redemption; yet it would be thoroughly consistent, that he should bring our Lord to a death so ignominious that His influence would be, presumably, destroyed.

We should not fail to recognize the significance of what our Lord omitted in that crucial hour. There was no assertion then, nor was there at any time, of the Father's sense of outraged justice, which demanded so great a

sacrifice ; there was only the humiliating confession that Satan held Him in his power, Pilate being only the tool of that power—a power that we may believe was held only by our Lord's voluntary surrender, in those divine councils in which He took up the gage that Satan had given, where man's redemption or man's deeper enthralment were the prizes to be won.

Can we believe that anything less than man's redemption from Satan was the price of such surrender, in which the crucifixion was only the wreaking of vengeance, the last spiteful injury, in the chagrin of thwarted temptation ?

And what an added glory and tenderness is given to the character of our Lord, what depth of love to mankind, if, instead of surrender to the hand of a loving Father, our Lord consented to subject Himself to the tyrannical power of the devil with all the spiritual humiliation and

suffering that it meant ! How great that humiliation and that shameful sorrow were, we can never know till we pass into the light His presence will give us; till then, only the faintest type of that degradation for our sakes would be that of a pure bride with her love and his devotion just pledged, compelled to leave her husband at the altar and to go away to a fate worse than death—to consort, as our Lord did, for forty days and nights, with the lowest and vilest being, the most degraded creature that imagination can picture, but accepting her degradation to save all who were dear to her from misery and persecution at the hands of this brutal creature. And yet how seldom, if ever, we bestow a thought on that suffering so terrible and so humiliating.

There was a time when men used only the rude mode of numeration, of which the Roman

notation was the perfected form; later there came the Arabic notation, where numerical values were represented by figures. Still later there was developed the higher mathematics, and men needed no arbitrary representatives of value, but thought computations, by letters and powers.

So man has computed and measured God's love and power. First, in the Mosaic computation, where all knowledge of God had to be revealed by voice of prophet, by cloud and pillar of fire, by constant visible expression of God's power; and through it all ran the ceaseless stream of blood.

With our Lord's personal appearance on earth there came a second period, a newer method of estimating and measuring God's love and power; far above the old Mosaic it was; far more spiritual; far more elevating—but still it was blood sacrifice, and a stern deity

to be appeased by blood; so like the old heathen ideas of satisfying a malignant deity, that it almost seemed as if men had grown so enthralled by the power of Satan that their minds could not comprehend any higher motives in Divinity than those which incited the blood sacrifices of the heathen about them. Yet side by side with this, strangely commingling at times, the heart pleading the love of Christ, the intellect urging the pitiless demand for justice, and in this stern demand finding the incentive to and excuse for terrible cruelties, the current of Christian thought and feeling has run on for centuries.

The old Mosaic idea that God was so angry with His children that only blood could appease Him, so pervaded the minds of those who, after our Lord's ascension, wrote their conception of His mission that they naturally regarded it in the same spirit of blood atonement that had

marked the Jewish service of the Temple, in which they had been educated; and they accepted and taught this, most naturally, in the light of the terrible tragedy they had witnessed, and that so many of them were to reproduce in similar suffering, in testimony to His divinity, with a heroism and devotion that we must accept as indisputable proof that they had positive evidence that our Lord was indeed the Christ of prophecy.

It was a most sincere, because a most natural belief, the outgrowth of their education, emphasized by that violent death of our Lord, and we have accepted it so unquestioningly that we ignore even the words of our Lord when they do not uphold this theory.*

But the third period will bring a truer, lovelier, more consistent recognition of God's love.

* See note, p. 45.

To us this appreciation may not come till we enter the realm of perfect intellectual and spiritual insight, and stand in the presence of Him whose mission on earth we have so misunderstood.

Then we shall know that it was only infinite sorrow and measureless suffering with man in his enthrallment by Satan—not the demand for expiatory sacrifice—that prompted the Father to accept the loving redemptive sacrifice of our Lord.

But with a more spiritual and intellectual age there will come a more logical and more thoughtful comprehension of God's plan of "buying back" the power He had given to that once glorious being, surely next to the Godhead in power, but in the pride of that power so lost to loyalty and gratitude that his grand power was used only for evil. Then he, not the heart of man, will be recognized as the source of all

evil—for, if we may accept all that is taught us by analogy in everything else in God's creation, man has in no way been inherently changed, only marred, unless Satan is ultimately stronger than God, or God, in the creating of man, produced a being beyond His control.

Almost impious would be the advancing of this theory of the literal "buying back" of man's spiritual freedom, if it were brought forward to combat a settled universal faith in that theory of redemption that is commonly advanced. But doubt, which is the honest cravings of the mind for some belief more consistent with the heart's interpretation of Divine love, a longing for a more natural exemplification of the Father's acceptance of the Christ sacrifice, is everywhere appearing.

The retiring Moderator of the Presbyterian General Assembly (in May, 1890) said :

“The number of candidates for ordination who reject some of the fundamental doctrines of our creed is said to be on the increase. Some of these do not hesitate to assail the doctrine of inspiration, our Lord’s miracles, the necessity of the Atonement, and the eternal punishment of the finally impenitent.”

And if in this most conservative body, there is compelled such confession of the weakening of old faiths, how common must be the revulsion to theories of divine government where the love of Christ teaches the heart, while the intellect vainly attempts to reconcile it with the union of love and severity that the blood-redemption teaches of the Father.

But it may be urged that if this theory of the redemptive mission of our Lord be true, why has it not been revealed to man? why has the truth been so long clouded?

First, because it is equally true in religious

development as in every other form of mental science, or in physical research, "Seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you."

And just as an Edison was ready when the world's need of electricity had prompted research into its wonders, so when the scientific thought in religion is so developed that the world stands waiting for a faith unclouded by mystery, and for a conception of redemption that is consistent with God's love, then there will come the interpreter with clear insight who, voicing the deeper truths which are seeking expression, will advocate this theory, if it is the most consistent, or reveal a wiser religious philosophy, if this will not bear the scrutiny of scientific yet reverent thought.

May we not also find an equally potent reason, in that delaying of all truth antagonistic to Satan's power, through his blinding of the intellect of man?

For in no way could Satan so influence man to evil as to persuade him that the evil in his heart is the evidence and assertion of man's independent individuality ; Satan thus hiding his own personality and influence, disguising his own motive, while in place of his own malignity that demanded the humiliation of our Lord as part of the price of man's spiritual freedom, Satan teaches man of a Father whose leading characteristics are stern justice and unrelenting purpose to punish ; a purpose that only the sacrifice of our Lord would appease.

And if the Father has not revealed his true attitude toward his children by direct means, yet surely we, "created in His image," may each find in his own heart the parallel of the waiting of the Father till His children shall respond to and appreciate His love ; in other words, till they seek and find the true and consistent conception of that love—a love which is only love,

not love mingled with a kind of justice which would only be satisfied with the punishment, not of the wicked but of one divinely innocent and good.

We may, then, fairly infer that any delay in the advance of His kingdom on earth is because He now equally waits, with a longing love that human hearts cannot appreciate, for the love that will defend His boundless love from that subtle imputation by which man is persuaded by Satan to believe that his malignity is the Father's stern severity, a severity that the heart of man does not the less revolt from, because his intellect is confused by calling it the impenetrable justice of God.

But it may be urged that it would lessen man's respect for the dignity of God, and weaken man's reverence for God's omnipotence, if we conceived of God as making terms of contest with Satan, and thus admitting that Satan

had an independent power which God must purchase back. Whereas if God had chosen He could have destroyed that power or its possessor.

But are we sure that God could destroy Satan or his power and not violate His moral nature ?

Our conception of God must be limited by our power of reasoning; yet it would seem impossible that there could be a God who would take pleasure in the love and obedience of moral and mental automatons in whom He inspired every thought and emotion.

On the lower plane on which we are created, we should have a repugnance to such associates. So it would seem impossible that God could be satisfied with other than independence of thought and emotion, in those He has created as His possible associates and whose love-born obedience He desires; even though such independence carries with it the possibility of disobedience and antagonism to the Creator.

Nor can we conceive it as consistent with what we may, without irreverence, call God's moral obligations, that He should make the gift of life, with all its mental endowments and moral freedom, other than an entire, unconditional gift which cannot be recalled from any being He endows with spiritual life, or its force weakened. Hence any surrender of that divinely bestowed power must be voluntarily made.

But if we revolt from the idea of Divinity stooping to make terms with Satan, it is only because we have grown accustomed to, rather have persistently ignored, the more incongruous and repugnant mingling of divine and demoniac power that attended the tragedy of our Lord's crucifixion, if it was *not wholly* the work of Satan; for it was Satan who put it into the heart of Judas to betray our Lord; it was from Satan that Pilate received the power to

crucify our Lord; our Lord admitted it was the hour of the power of darkness. There could be nothing apparently less consistent with divine dignity than that God should invite Satan to join Him, or that he should be compelled to share with Satan in the solemn preparation for that divine tragedy, in which, moreover, it is illogical to claim that Satan would have taken any part—that “Satan would cast out Satan”—in procuring that sacrifice which would overthrow his power over man, or even reconcile God to man, if the crucifixion was really the means of man’s redemption.

If then, in the light of all that the words of our Lord seem to express, we can accept the theory of malignity and evil ambition on the part of Satan, that urged him on to such desire to debase even Divinity, can we not naturally attribute to his direct constant exercise of power all the evil in the world, and consider it

to be his entering in, just as he “entered into” the heart of Judas? ‡

If then, we can find evidence enough to convince us that Satan’s “entering into” man is universal and continuous and not confined to this particular time, what a naturalness it gives to the doctrine of forgiveness! Forgiveness then becomes no longer a suppression of an instinct to inflict a merited punishment on one who has done us an injury, an injury which, if it had been inflicted on another, and we were officers of justice, we should feel it our duty to punish; but instead, we can forgive, not merely suppressing punishment, as most forgiveness is, but forgiving in reality, because back of the wrong done we should recognize its real cause in Satan, who had “entered in” where the man was to blame for not guarding, but was not the real malignant offender.

‡ See page 45.

So too when we fall into temptation (and how seldom we attach their literal meaning to those words), when we are tempted to do a wrong, our self-respect and spirit of independence would rally all our better nature to repel the entering-in, if we *at heart* recognized the temptation as an attempt of a real Satanic personality to enter into us ; and so we should rebel against the captivity.

Then, in our hatred of Satan for his efforts to make us the sport of his moods of evil, we should be constant in our warfare against his power, and we should oppose it with all the intensity that we should if he were physically visible to us, and we could look into his malignant face and hear the subtle voice that tried to debase our Lord.

And if this theory be tenable—that the constant “entering in” of Satan is the source of all moral evil—let us see if the words and acts

of our Lord do not justify the belief that for evil Satan has the power to enter into the bodies and physical surroundings of men, and that Satan alone is responsible for physical suffering and the pain that results from material disorder ; responsible, too, for death.

In nothing else does the heart influence the intellect so much as in the judgment that the mind gives in spiritual things ; so when our Lord said, "Ought not this woman whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond?" we will consider that this woman alone, of all people that went before or have followed her, suffered at the hands of Satan, or we will consider that our Lord thus gave us an insight into a general and universal cause of suffering.

Each one will choose—will judge of this, open equally to either construction—as his mind revolts from, or can accept, the theory of a lov-

ing God who can inflict suffering. Yet he who accepts this last theory, charges God with a purpose to establish His highest degree of earthly creation on so low a plane of moral motive, that suffering was needed to purify its spiritual life. We cannot conceive of God as needing such accessories to illustrate His power. Let us then consider the evident spirit of our Lord's miracles, and see what is the broader lesson that they teach.

“Jesus wept.” If death came to Lazarus at a time and under conditions that God had chosen as the best that a loving Father could choose, why did Jesus weep? Why did He restore him to life? To be sure it may be said that He wept for the bereaved sisters; but He knew that in a short time their sorrow would be turned to keenest joy, in the restoration of that life—life that would not have been even temporarily suspended “if Thou hadst been here.” Is it not

a higher conception of His emotion, to accept the broader view, that for all humanity He wept, because it was in the power of Satan to bring the pain of bereavement to all mankind?

So, too, when He healed the sick, was He interfering with a divine plan of discipline through suffering?

Surely we must discover, for his and our own promptings to relieve suffering, some other motive than to interfere with divinely-sent pain, which God intends as a needed discipline to creatures He has purposely made so weak that they require such discipline; a discipline that experience tells us may strengthen the few who are spiritually robust, but to the many, the weak, brings doubt and indifference, if not positive antagonism to God.

Far more consistent is the Mahommedan, who when the pestilence comes, does not even attempt sanitary alleviations, but with "It is

written," resigns himself to the, believed, will of God, and allows the plague to follow the path that he considers God has marked out for it.

If, then, we read the words and personal history of our Lord in the light of this theory—that God is loving and conserving only, not destructive and sternly seeking cause for punishment—in how much we shall find a new meaning, how much with a meaning that we have passed over as extravagant and only figurative, instead of accepting it as literally and sadly true.

Take for instance those mournful admissions of our Lord : " The prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in me," and " My kingdom is not of this world." What indisputable evidence are these admissions of the malignant power of Satan in this world ; yet it does not fit in with our preconceived theories, and so in

the future, as in the past, we will consider these as extravagant expressions of our Lord, and continue to give them only a semblance of belief. For in no way could we do more faithful service to Satan than by ignoring his principship for evil, in continuing to believe that God rules with the contradictory attributes of deepest love, yet bringing suffering and bereavement to creatures whom He purposely created with affinity for sin, then gave them into the power of one who had been able to seduce even angels in heaven; yet not content with the suffering of the divinely innocent for their sakes, must continue to send pain and bereavement to punish them.

If we could only conceive how our Lord waits to be *believed*; waits to have His words that describe Satan's power on earth, no longer considered as hyperbole but terrible truth—and in the light of that truth that we should logi-

cally weigh the probable results of such princship of Satan—then how thoroughly our conception of Satan's malignity would bring to us a new view of the authorship of pain and death.

If Satan were so unmasked, in this full abiding conviction of his evil intent, how greatly would his princship be deprived of its power, in our constant guarding against one who may be recognized as the source of all pain, all suffering, and of all evil intent on the part of our fellow-man, and of all derangements of the physical universe that bring suffering.

Then, too, in the new and perfect welcome that we should thus give to God, He would enter in and repossess Himself of that kingdom on earth, which can never have a real welcome for Him, which can never be His "bought-back" possession so long as man believes that from Him comes pain or sorrow, or the allow-

ing of sin to exist for some wise but obscure purpose.

To what a higher plane, then, will the discipline of suffering be brought, when we believe that in all suffering God is never the cause of suffering, but suffers with us !



NOTES.

* (*See page 26.*) How ill-fitted they were to comprehend the true mission of our Lord, is shown in their confessed incompetence,† and more clearly evidenced in those rebukes of our Lord, which began on the road to Emmaus, where we may believe it was not His power that made the “eyes holden”—else He would not have so sharply rebuked their lack of comprehension. The disbelief of Thomas seemingly ended these trying experiences of our Lord, but there is no evidence that then there came a true comprehension of His mission. Nor have we any assurance that the subsequent opening of their understanding “to the Scriptures” included a perfect recognition of what He had not successfully taught them while living among them.

† (*See page 36.*) We have no right to suppose that our Lord used so little discretion in the choosing of His apostles that He selected the traitor with knowledge that he was not devoted to Him.

We cannot suppose, even humanly speaking, that our Lord lacked the perception that would enable Him to discern a bad man, or that He would retain him in the number of the apostles. Rather we may consider that he was so devoted to our Lord that, “Lord, is it I; is it I?” passed from lip to lip, because his life had excluded him from suspicion. And let us not forget that our Lord was constantly impressing on His apostles that no advantage would come to them in following Him. So Judas had no mercenary motive in acting the part of a devoted disciple.

† Luke xviii., 34.

It is more natural to consider him as sincere and true, till the terrible power of Satan entered into him, without his volition, though doubtless entering at that weakest point where he was culpable for not fortifying himself, his love of money. The words of our Lord, in Luke xxii. 31, 32, have a significance in this connection, as showing the difference between the fall of Peter and that of Judas; both of whom would be taken possession of by Satan—as our Lord foresaw. That our Lord recognized this difference is indicated by His offering no prayer for Judas. Peter fell because an unexpected danger—and what probably seemed to him a timid surrender by his Master—suddenly unmanned him; and so Satan “entered in,” as it were by an assault: but Peter gave Satan no permission to remain.

Judas, on the other hand, did not expel Satan; it would seem as if for days he entertained the subtle enemy of his Master, and deliberately made Satan a permitted, if not a welcome, guest.

Yet where the enforced presence of Satan ends, and where his presence is no longer opposed, can never be rightly judged by us, who “know not what’s resisted.”

Incidentally, it seems evident from these words of St. Luke that our Lord was so thoroughly in the power of Satan, that though he knew that Peter had been chosen to be the subject of a successful temptation, our Lord was powerless to prevent—and could only invoke, through prayer, the influence that would restore Peter to loyalty to his Master. So completely was our Lord “led” into Satan’s power, in His redemptive surrender.

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